

SPBI 1971 Season in Review

1971 Season Re-cap

Once again, pitching dominated. The 22 teams averaged 128 home runs each, down 30 home runs on average from 1970. The American League had a bit more power and speed than the National League, but the Senior Circuit had a slight advantage in on-base percentage and runs scored.

The American League races were not too close, as the Rats won by 13 games and the Tigers won by 9.

The National League East race was very close, as the Tourists won by 3 games over the Spiders. The Spiders finished in 2nd place despite 101 wins. The Thunder won in a landslide in the NL West by 19 games.

For the first time in the 4 years that I have been predicting the races, I was way off! I had double-digit variances in all 4 divisions. My worst predictions were for the Spiders (off by 24 games), and for the Mountaineers (off by 22 games). I guess I'll have to re-tool my think tank for 1972...

1971 Final Standings					Predictions		
AL EAST	W	L	Pct	GB	W - L	Place	+/-
Flushing Rats	104	58	.642	-	94 - 68	(1)	+10
Schaumburg Saxons	91	71	.562	13	85 - 77	(3)	+6
Niskayuna Red Storm	91	71	.562	13	90 - 72	(2)	+1
Spirit Mtn. Volcanoes	66	96	.407	38	63 - 99	(5)	+3
Blue Ridge Mountaineers	57	105	.352	47	79 - 83	(4)	-22
AL WEST	W	L	Pct	GB	W - L	Place	+/-
Frankfort Tigers	108	54	.667	-	92 - 70	(2)	+16
Rossville Cubs	99	63	.611	9	83 - 79	(4)	+16
Dayton Triangles	86	76	.531	22	96 - 66	(1)	-10
Baltimore Stallions	81	81	.500	27	84 - 78	(3)	-3
Elkhart Eels	57	105	.352	51	60 - 102	(5)	-3
Mill City Millers	42	120	.259	66	58 - 104	(6)	-16
NL EAST	W	L	Pct	GB	W - L	Place	+/-
Asheville Tourists	104	58	.642	-	88 - 74	(2)	+16
Cleveland Spiders	101	61	.623	3	77 - 85	(3)	+24
Lafayette Chiefs	80	82	.494	24	89 - 73	(1)	-9
Kansas City Red Streaks	72	90	.444	32	75 - 87	(4)	-3
Evanston Black Sox	69	93	.426	35	70 - 92	(5)	-1
NL WEST	W	L	Pct	GB	W - L	Place	+/-
Las Vegas Thunder	108	54	.667	-	107 - 55	(1)	+1
Rockford Forest Citys	89	73	.549	19	86 - 76	(3)	+3
Amboy Dukes	75	87	.463	33	72 - 90	(5)	+3
Fairfax Peppers	70	92	.432	38	83 - 79	(4)	-13
Hollywood Stars	69	93	.426	39	87 - 75	(2)	-18
Kenosha Eagles	63	99	.389	45	62 - 100	(6)	+1

1971 Playoffs

In the ALCS, the Rats defeated the Tigers in a close 5-game series. The first 4 games were all decided by 1 run each. There were a lot of home runs hit, compared to the low amount of runs scored. The Rats hit 4 home runs and scored just 11 runs, while the Tigers scored but 7 runs to go along with their 4 home runs. Tom Seaver was the series MVP. He pitched two complete games, one a shutout, and was 2-0 with 19 strikeouts. Gaylord Perry came close with his one complete-game shutout (only allowing 4 base runners). The Tigers' Ken McMullen gets an honorable mention for his fine offensive showing (.471, 2 home runs, 4 runs scored).

In the NLCS, the Thunder defeated the Tourists in another close 5-games series. Three of the five games were decided by one run. Sandy Alomar and Reggie Jackson were named co-MVP's of the series. Alomar collected 14 hits for a .609 batting average. Jackson was fairly quiet for the first four games, but his two home runs in the 2-1 finale won the game and the series for the Thunder, which "started him well on the way of earning his legendary moniker "Mr. October"."

1971 World Series

In the World Series, the Rats won against the heavily-favored Thunder. Tom Seaver was unanimously selected World Series MVP with two complete-game wins, 1 shutout, 23 strikeouts and only 10 hits in 18 innings.

Miscellaneous Team Reports

The **Spiders** had the most hits in a game with **25** on July 3rd against the Peppers at Fenway Park. The **Thunder** and the **Tourists** each had 4 20-hit games, while the **Spiders** and the **Chiefs** each had 3 20-hit games.

The **Thunder** scored the most runs in a game with **24**. The Thunder did it on June 26th against the Tigers at Tiger Stadium. Fittingly, the **Tigers** had the only other 20 run game, defeating the Triangles 20-4 on July 16th at Veteran's Stadium.

The **Forest Citys** had the most home runs in a game with **7** against the Tigers on April 15th. Once again, the **Tigers** show their versatility by getting **6** home runs of their own in a game, against the Saxons on June 14th.

The **Forest Citys** had the most stolen bases in a game with **6**, against the Red Streaks on July 6th.

The **Tigers** had **13** pinch-hit home runs to lead all teams.

The **Forest Citys** had a **15-game** winning streak from July 6th through July 23rd.

The **Mill City Millers** lost 17 games in a row on two different occasions, July 7th through July 27th, and August 28th through September 18th.

The **Red Storm** had at least 1 home run in **20** straight games from June 17th through July 7th.

The **Triangles** and **Saxons** each had the most team Grand Slams with **6**.

There were **5** No-Hitters and **19** 1-hitters! The **Stallions** had 2 No-Hitters. The **Mountaineers** were No-hit twice.

The **Red Streaks** and the **Tigers** each had **3** consecutive home runs on 2 different occasions. The Red Streaks did it on May 13th and May 22nd, while the Tigers did it on August 13th and September 21st.

The **Mill City Millers**, with **120** loses, broke the SPBI record of 118 loses, set by the '62 Rats and tied by the '64 Reefers.

Miscellaneous Hitting Reports

Manny Sanguillen of the Saxons had a **29-game** hit streak. **Sal Bando** of the Tourists was close with a **25-game** hit streak.

Lee May of the Chiefs had a **4-home run** game on August 30th against the Spiders.

Mike Epstein(Eagles), **Tony Oliva** (Saxons) and **Frank Robinson**(Red Storm) each had **3** Grand Slams.

Cleon Jones(Triangles), **Jose Cruz**(Spiders) and **Ralph Garr**(Forest Citys) each had **4** leadoff home runs.

The Triangles' **Cesar Geronimo** led SPB with **32** pinch-hits. **Gates Brown** of the Spiders was a distant 2nd with **23**.

The Tigers' **Don Buford** had **10** consecutive hits from August 26th through September 6th.

Ken Henderson of the Spiders hit for the **cycle** on May 8th against the Eels.

Miscellaneous Pitching Reports

Sonny Siebert(Triangles), **Ray Lamb**(Stallions), **Jack Billingham**(Dukes) and **Marty Pattin**(Red Streaks) each threw a complete-game no-hitter. I did previously mention there were 5 no-hitters in 1971. Well, **Ray Lamb** (8 innings) and **Eddie Watt** (2 innings) combined for a 10-inning, 1-0 no-hitter for the Stallions against the Black Sox on May 13th.

Iron-man **Wilbur Wood** of the Thunder pitched a 13-inning, complete-game, 1-hit shutout against the Eagles on September 10th!

The Rats' **Tom Seaver** had **15** Strikeouts in one game on September 1st against the Mountaineers.

Miscellaneous Fielding Reports

Gene Alley of the Spiders committed **3** errors in a game on **3** different occasions!

1971 Award Winners

AL MVP- **Willie Stargell** (Triangles)

Seventh in batting average (.312), first in Home Runs (53), first in RBIs (132), first in Total Bases (344)

AL Cy Young- **Tom Seaver** (Rats)

24-6, 1.57 ERA, 316 K ("Pitcher's" Triple Crown)

AL Fireman- **Bob Miller** (Cubs)

6-2, 33 S, 1.20 ERA

NL MVP- **Joe Torre** (Spiders)

First in batting average (.357), First in Hits (227), eighth in Home Runs (25), second in RBIs (117)

NL Cy Young- **Vida Blue** (Thunder)

27-5, 1.60 ERA, 280 K ("Pitcher's" Triple Crown)

NL Fireman- **Ken Sanders** (Spiders)

7-1, 33 S, 2.45 ERA

1971 American League All Stars

C: **Manny Sanguillen** (Saxons), **Johnny Bench** (Rats)

1B: **Norm Cash** (Tigers), **Boog Powell** (Cubs)

2B: **Glenn Beckert** (Cubs), **Dick McAuliffe** (Tigers)

3B: **Tony Perez** (Rats), **Tommy Harper** (Cubs)

SS: **Freddie Patek** (Saxons), **Bud Harrelson** (Tigers)

LF: **Willie Stargell** (Triangles), **Hank Aaron** (Red Storm)

CF: **Tommie Agee** (Saxons), **Matty Alou** (Triangles)

RF: **Billy Williams** (Triangles), **Tony Oliva** (Saxons)

SP: **Tom Seaver** (Rats), **Gaylord Perry** (Rats), **Bill Hands** (Tigers)

RP: **Bob Miller** (Cubs), **Fred Gladding** (Tigers), **Clay Carroll** (Red Storm)

1971 National League All Stars

C: **Tim McCarver** (Chiefs), **George Mitterwald** (Spiders)

1B: **Lee May** (Chiefs), **Bob Robertson** (Forest Citys)

2B: **Joe Morgan** (Forest Citys), **Rod Carew** (Thunder)

3B: **Joe Torre** (Spiders), **Sal Bando** (Tourists)

SS: **Don Kessinger** (Chiefs), **Steve Braun** (Peppers)

LF: **Ralph Garr** (Forest Citys), **Ken Henderson** (Spiders)

CF: **Bobby Murcer** (Forest Citys), **Reggie Smith** (Stars)

RF: **Bobby Bonds** (Tourists), **Reggie Jackson** (Thunder)

SP: **Vida Blue** (Thunder), **Fergie Jenkins** (Tourists), **Mickey Lolich** (Spiders)

RP: **Ken Sanders** (Spiders), **Frank Linzy** (Red Streaks), **Tug McGraw** (Thunder)